

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (canceled)

2. (previously presented) A sample processing container comprising:

a container body having an accommodating part for accommodating a sample therein, a front engagement part arranged at a front of the accommodating part and a rear engagement part arranged at a rear of the accommodating part; and

a lid body whereas at least a part thereof is curved, the lid body having a front side and a rear side, the rear side of the lid body being provided with a rear engagement member which is engageable with the rear engagement part of the container body and the front side of the lid body being provided with a rear engagement member which is engageable with the front engagement part of the container body;

wherein engagement of the front and rear engagement members of the lid body with the front and rear engagement parts of the container body respectively allows the lid body to be fitted to the container body and causes the lid body to be elastically deformed into either a plane state or a reduced-curved state in which a degree of curvature of the lid body is reduced; and

wherein releasing the engagement of the front engagement member of the lid body with the front engagement part of the container body allows the lid body to be restored elastically, so that the front side of the lid body is separated from the container body , wherein:

the front engagement part of the container body comprises:

a front engagement member which extends in a left-and-right direction of the sample processing container and which is elastically displaceable in a

front-and-rear direction of the sample processing container and also engageable with the front engagement member of the lid body; and

an immovable member arranged so that a gap is formed between the front engaging member and the immovable member with respect to the front-and-rear direction;

when the front engagement member of the lid body is engaged with the front engagement member, the front engagement member is positioned in the gap between the front engagement member and the immovable member of the container body; and

upon depressing a predetermined member into the gap between the front engagement member and the immovable member, the front engagement member of the container body is displaced in the front-and-rear direction due to a wedge action of the predetermined member, whereby the engagement of the front engagement member of the lid body with the front engagement member of the container body is released.

3. (original) The container according to claim 2, wherein the immovable member of the front engagement part of the container body is formed by a front wall defining a front side of the accommodating part of the container body.

4. (previously presented) The container according to claim 2, wherein the front engagement member of the container body is capable of swinging about an axis extending in the left-and-right direction, and thus the front engagement member can be displaced in the front-and-rear direction by a swing action of the front engagement member.

5. (previously presented) The container according to claim 2, wherein at least a part of gap defined between the front engagement member and the

immovable member of the container body is exposed upward without being covered with the lid body when the lid body is fitted to the container body.

6. (original) The container according to claim 5, wherein
the lid body is provided with a pair of the front engagement members; and
the gap defined between the front engagement member and the immovable member of the container body is exposed upward between the front engagement members without being covered with the lid body, when the lid body is fitted to the container body.

7. (original) A sample processing container comprising:
a container body having an accommodating part for accommodating a sample therein,
a front engagement part arranged at a front of the accommodating part and a rear engagement part arranged at a rear of the accommodating part; and

a lid body having a base part provided with a rear engagement member engageable with the rear engagement part of the container body, and first and second movable parts connected in parallel to a front side of the base part with respect to a left-and-right direction of the sample processing container;

wherein the first movable part is provided with a front engagement member engageable with the front engagement part of the container body, and the second movable part is provided with a disengagement member acting on the front engagement part of the container body thereby to release an engagement between the front engagement part and the front engagement member; and

wherein the container body and the lid body are configured so that:
the front engagement member engages with the front engagement part under condition that the first movable part is deformed elastically; and

when an engagement of the front engagement member with the front engagement part is released by the disengagement member, the first movable part is restored elastically so that the front engagement member is apart from the front engagement part of the container body.

8. (original) The container according to claim 7, wherein:

the front engagement part of the container body has a front engagement member extending in the left-and-right direction and capable of elastic displacement in a front-and-rear direction;

the front engagement member is engageable with the front engagement member of the first movable part and capable of displacement by an action of the disengagement member of the second movable part; and

the container body and the lid body are configured so that, when the disengagement member of the second movable part butts against the front engagement member of the container body and the disengagement member moves downward, the front engagement member is displaced so that the engagement of the front engagement member of the first movable part with the front engagement part of the container body is released.

9. (previously presented) The container according to claim 7, wherein:

the lid body is formed so as to be a generally flat plate when the lid body is fitted to the container body;

the front part of the lid body is divided into three portions by two slits extending in the front-and-rear direction, an intermediate one of the three portions forming the second movable part shaped to be substantially flat, left and right ones of the three portion forming the first movable part shaped to be curved; and

the rear part of the lid body, which has no slit formed therein, forms the base part.

10. (previously presented) The container according to claim 7, wherein:
the front engagement part of the container body has:
a front wall defining the front side of the accommodating part of the container body;
and
and a front engagement member arranged in front of the front wall so that a gap is
formed between the front wall and the front engaging member;
the disengagement member is wedge-shaped and is formed on an under face of the
second movable part; and
upon depressing the wedge-shaped disengagement member into the gap between the
front wall of the accommodating part and the front engagement member, the wedge-shaped
disengagement member displaces the front engagement member, whereby the engagement of
the front engagement member of the first movable part with the front engagement part of the
container body is released.
11. (previously presented) The container according to claim 8, wherein the front
engagement member of the container body is capable of swinging about an axis extending in
the left-and-right direction, and thus the front engagement member can be displaced in the
front-and-rear direction by a swing action of the front engagement member.
12. (previously presented) The container according to claim 8, wherein:
the disengagement member is formed on an under face of the second movable part
and has a slant face; and
when the slant face of the disengagement member butts against the front engagement
member of the container body and the disengagement member moves downward, the front
engagement member is displaced forward by the slant face, whereby the engagement of the

front engagement member of the first movable part with the front engagement part of the container body is released.

13. (original) A sample processing container comprising:

a container body having an accommodating part for accommodating a sample therein,
a front engagement part arranged at a front of the accommodating part and a rear engagement part arranged at a rear of the accommodating part; and

a lid body having a base part provided with a rear engagement member engageable with the rear engagement part of the container body, and immovable and movable parts connected in parallel to a front side of the base part with respect to a left-and-right direction, the immovable part being substantially immovable to the base part, the movable part being movable to the base part, the immovable part being provided with a front engagement member which is engageable with the front engagement part of the container body;

wherein the container body and the lid body are configured so that:

upon movement of the immovable part toward the front engagement part of the container body, the immovable part engages with the front engagement part of the container body under condition that the movable part is deformed elastically; and

when an engagement of the front engagement member of the immovable part with the front engagement part of the container body is released by the disengagement member, the movable part is restored elastically so that the front engagement member of the immovable part is apart from the front engagement part of the container body.

14. (original) The container according to claim 13, wherein:

the front engagement part of the container body has:

a front engagement member extending in the left-and-right direction and capable of

both elastic displacement in the front-and-rear direction and engagement with the front engagement member of the lid body; and

an immovable member arranged so that a gap is formed between the front engaging member and the immovable member with respect to the front-and-rear direction;

when the front engagement member of the lid body engages with the front engagement member of the container body, the front engagement member is positioned in the gap between the front engagement member and the immovable member of the container body; and

upon depressing a predetermined member into the gap between the front engagement member and the immovable member, the predetermined member displaces the front engagement member of the container body in the front-and-rear direction due to a wedge action of the predetermined member, whereby the engagement of the front engagement member of the lid body with the front engagement member of the container body is released.

15. (original) The sample processing container according to claim 14, wherein the immovable member of the front engagement part of the container body is formed by a front wall defining a front side of the accommodating part of the container body.

16. (previously presented) The container according to claim 14, wherein at least a part of gap defined between the front engagement member and the immovable member of the container body is exposed upward without being covered with the lid body when the lid body is fitted to the container body.

17. (original) The container according to claim 16, wherein the gap defined between the front engagement member and the immovable member of the container body is exposed upward in an area corresponding to the movable part without being covered with the lid body when the lid body is fitted to the container body.

18. (original) The container according to claim 13, wherein the movable part of the lid body is provided with a disengagement member for releasing the engagement between the front engagement part of the container body and the front engagement member of the immovable part.

19. (previously presented) The container according to claim 18, wherein:
the front engagement part of the container body has a front engagement member extending in the left-and-right direction and capable of elastic displacement in the front-and-rear direction;

the front engagement member of the immovable part is engageable with the front engagement member of the movable part and capable of displacement by an action of the disengagement member of the movable part; and

when the disengagement member of the movable part butts against the front engagement member of the container body and the disengagement member moves, the front engagement member is displaced so that the engagement of the front engagement member of the movable part with the front engagement part of the container body is released.

20. (previously presented) The container according to claim 18, wherein
the disengagement member is connected to the movable part so as to be rotatable about an axis extending in the left-and-right direction, and

wherein upon depressing the disengagement member downward, the disengagement member displaces the front engagement member of the container body in the front-and-rear direction due to a rotation of the disengagement member.

21. (previously presented) The container according to claim 13, wherein the front engagement member of the container body is capable of swinging about an axis extending in the left-and-right direction, and thus the front engagement member can be displaced in the front-and-rear direction by a swing action of the front engagement member.

22. (previously presented) The container according to claim 13, wherein the lid body is provided with a pair of the immovable parts, and the movable part is arranged between the immovable parts.

23. (original) The container according to claim 22, wherein:
the lid body is substantially box-shaped when the lid body is fitted to the container body;
the front part of the lid body is divided into three parts by two slits extending in the front-and-rear direction, an intermediate one of the three parts forming the movable part, left and right ones of the three parts forming the immovable parts; and
the rear part of the lid body, which has no slit formed therein, forms the base part.

24. (original) The container according to claim 23, wherein the lid body configured so that:

when the engagement of the front engagement member of the lid body with the front engagement part of the container body is released, a top wall of each of the immovable parts

substantially positioned in a plane including a top wall of the base part; and

a top wall of the movable part is curved so as to be gradually apart from the plane including the top wall of the base part according to its proximity of a front end of the lid body.

25. (canceled.)

26. (previously presented) A sample processing container comprising:

a container body having an accommodating part for accommodating a sample therein, a front engagement part arranged at a front of the accommodating part and a rear engagement part arranged at a rear of the accommodating part; and

a lid body whereas at least a part thereof is curved, the lid body having a front side and a rear side, the rear side of the lid body being provided with a rear engagement member which is engageable with the rear engagement part of the container body and the front side of the lid body being provided with a rear engagement member which is engageable with the front engagement part of the container body;

wherein engagement of the front and rear engagement members of the lid body with the front and rear engagement parts of the container body respectively allows the lid body to be fitted to the container body and causes the lid body to be elastically deformed into either a plane state or a reduced-curved state in which a degree of curvature of the lid body is reduced; and

wherein releasing the engagement of the front engagement member of the lid body with the front engagement part of the container body allows the lid body to be restored elastically, so that the front side of the lid body is separated from the container body, wherein a lid body forms the container, wherein the lid body is in the form of a generally flat plate,

said lid body comprising:

a base part arranged on the rear side of the lid body, the base part having a rear engagement member formed on a rear side thereof; and

first and second movable parts connected in parallel to a front side of the base part with respect to a left-and-right direction, the first movable part being curved, the second movable part being substantially flat;

wherein the front side of the first movable part is provided with a front engagement member, and a front side of the second movable part is provided with a wedge-shaped member having a slant face.

27. - 31. (canceled)